



# CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

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On the Political Front  
by Henry A. Waxman  
Congressman, 24th District

December 18, 1975

## DETENTE FAILS TO SOFTEN SOVIET TYRANNY

I hope President Ford and Secretary Kissinger paid close attention to the message delivered by Andrei D. Sakharov's wife when she accepted the Nobel Peace Prize for the Soviet physicist. Mrs. Sakharov read an address written by her husband for the occasion. The prize winner had hoped to attend the ceremonies himself but was forbidden to do so by the Soviet authorities.

The Sakharov message was blunt and saddening. Looking back on events since the Helsinki conference last summer he charged, "There has been absolutely no real improvement in the direction of more human rights and freedom in the Soviet Union."

For Americans, this meant that so reliable an observer as Sakharov did not detect even the slightest benefits to the Russian people from our policy of detente.

In fact, the Nobel Prize winner declared that in certain respects the situation in the Soviet Union has worsened for both dissident intellectuals and oppressed minorities such as the Russian Jews.

Mrs. Sakharov called special attention to the fearful Soviet decree of a 70% tax on all money received by Soviet citizens from abroad. This harsh new law, which goes into effect December 20th, will bring incalculable suffering to those Russians in conflict with the regime. Hundreds of Russian families manage to make ends meet only because of money sent from abroad.

Countless Jews who have applied for exit visas to Israel have no means of support other than funds sent them from outside the country. The common practice in the U.S.S.R. is to deny employment to any person who applies to leave.

Of course, some Americans defend a detente which has accomplished nothing in the field of human rights. They say that the purpose of detente is to promote peace not to alter the internal features of the Soviet's system. Sakharov's Nobel address directed itself eloquently to this line of reasoning. The crusader for human rights in the Soviet Union entitled his speech "Peace, Progress, and Human Rights." He began his lecture with these words,



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"Peace, progress, human rights -- these three goals are indissolubly linked to one another. It is impossible to achieve one of these goals if the other two are ignored."

According to Sakharov, real peace with the Soviet Union will not be possible until the Soviet rulers modify their extremely repressive attitudes towards human rights. The Nobel laureate depicted progress towards peace as requiring movement away from a world view which places little value on the rights and even lives of hundreds of millions of people.

As I evaluate the claims made by the Ford Administration or Administrations yet to come, I will always bear in mind these sentiments of Andrei Sakharov:

"I am convinced that international confidence, mutual understanding, disarmament and international security are inconceivable without an open society with freedom of information, freedom of conscience, the right to publish, and the right to travel and choose the country in which one wishes to live."

end